

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please amend the specification as follows.

[0021] Iodine-bearing flexible rod 15 may comprise a bio-compatible polymer material, such as a polycarbonate, urethane, ethyl, vinyl acetate, nylon, etc., adapted to carry the iodine to be released when the iodine-bearing rod is inserted through catheter 8. In addition iodine-bearing flexible rod 15 may be affixed at its proximal end to a side arm tube end cap 16, as illustrated in Fig. 3. While attachment of iodine-bearing flexible rod 15 to cap 16 is not necessary for the use of the present invention, attachment to cap 16 permits an operator to avoid directly touching the proximal end of iodine-bearing flexible rod 15 while inserting or removing the rod through the catheter. In this embodiment, cap 16 contains internal threads 18 which cooperate with external threads about the proximal end of side arm tube 13 (not shown) to seal side arm tube 13 when iodine-bearing flexible rod 15 is inserted into the catheter. Other cap engagement configurations may alternatively be used, as long as cap 16 effectively seals side arm tube 13, such as a stopper which frictionally engages the inner or outer surfaces of the side arm tube, an externally threaded cap, or bayonet features that cooperate with corresponding features on the end of side arm tube 13.

IN THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in this application.

1. (Currently amended) An infection management system, comprising:
 - a catheter with a lumen extending therethrough;
 - a side-arm tube extending laterally from a side of the catheter, wherein the side-arm tube is located in a region of the catheter which remains outside a patient's body, and
 - a lumen through the side-arm tube communicates with the catheter lumen;
 - a one-way valve which prevents fluid flow from the catheter lumen through the side-arm tube lumen without preventing fluid flow through the catheter lumen; **and**

an antimicrobial agent-bearing intervention device configured to be inserted through the side-arm tube lumen and the one-way valve into the catheter lumen, wherein the antimicrobial agent is configured to be released from the intervention device after the intervention device has been inserted into the catheter lumen; and

a cap coupled to a proximal end of the antimicrobial agent-bearing intervention device to facilitate user handling of the antimicrobial agent-bearing intervention device without direct contact with the proximal end of the antimicrobial agent-bearing intervention device.

2. (Original) The infection management system of claim 1, wherein

the catheter comprises a catheter body and an extension joined to a proximal end of the catheter body, the extension having a lumen extending longitudinally therethrough and in communication with the catheter lumen, and

the side-arm tube extends laterally from the catheter extension.

3. (Original) The infection management system of claim 1, wherein

the antimicrobial agent-bearing intervention device comprises an antimicrobial agent-bearing rod.

4. (Original) The infection management system of claim 3, wherein

the antimicrobial agent-bearing rod comprises a flexible polymer rod.

5. (Original) The infection management system of claim 1, wherein

the antimicrobial agent is iodine.

6. (Currently amended) The infection management system of claim 1, wherein

a region of the catheter ~~to-be-located-within-the-patient's-body~~ comprises a material which permits passage of the antimicrobial agent released from the antimicrobial agent-bearing intervention device from the catheter lumen to an outer surface of the catheter.

7. (Currently amended) The infection management system of claim 3, ~~further comprising:~~

~~a cap, wherein the antimicrobial agent-bearing rod is affixed to the cap, and the cap is adapted to seal a proximal end of the side-arm tube after the antimicrobial agent-bearing rod is inserted into the catheter lumen.~~

8. (Original) The infection management system of claim 7, wherein
the cap has a threaded portion that cooperates with a threaded portion on the side-arm tube.

9. (Canceled)

10. (Previously presented) An infection management method, comprising the steps of:
providing a catheter with a lumen extending therethrough, a side-arm tube extending laterally from a side of the catheter, wherein the side-arm tube is located in a region of the catheter which remains outside a patient's body and a lumen through the side-arm tube communicates with the catheter lumen, and a one-way valve located to prevent fluid flow from the catheter lumen through the side-arm tube lumen without preventing fluid flow through the catheter lumen; and
inserting an antimicrobial agent-bearing intervention device through the side-arm tube and the one-way valve into the catheter lumen, wherein the antimicrobial agent is configured to be released from the intervention device after the intervention device has been inserted into the catheter lumen and a cap is coupled to a proximal end of the antimicrobial agent-bearing intervention device to facilitate user handling of the antimicrobial agent-bearing intervention device without direct contact with the proximal end of the antimicrobial agent-bearing intervention device.

11. (Original) The infection management method of claim 10, wherein
the catheter comprises a catheter body and an extension joined to a proximal end of the catheter body, the extension having a lumen extending longitudinally therethrough and in communication with the catheter lumen, and
the side-arm tube extends laterally from the catheter extension.

12. (Original) The infection management method of claim 10, wherein
the antimicrobial agent-bearing intervention device comprises an antimicrobial agent-bearing rod.

13. (Original) The infection management method of claim 12, wherein
the antimicrobial agent-bearing rod comprises a flexible polymer rod.

14. (Original) The infection management method of claim 10, wherein the antimicrobial agent is iodine.
15. (Currently amended) The infection management method of claim 10, wherein a region of the catheter ~~to be located within the patient's body~~ comprises a material which permits passage of the antimicrobial agent released from the antimicrobial agent-bearing intervention device from the catheter lumen to an outer surface of the catheter.
16. (Currently amended) The infection management method of claim 10, ~~further comprising:~~ a cap, wherein the antimicrobial agent-bearing rod is affixed to the cap, and the cap is adapted to seal a proximal end of the side-arm tube after the antimicrobial agent-bearing rod is inserted into the catheter lumen.
17. (Original) The infection management method of claim 16, wherein the cap has a threaded portion that cooperates with a threaded portion on the side-arm tube.
18. (Canceled)
19. (Previously presented) An anti-infection catheter, comprising a main catheter tube with a lumen extending therethrough; a side-arm tube extending laterally from a side of the main catheter tube, wherein the side-arm tube is located in a region of the catheter which remains outside a patient's body, and a lumen through the side-arm tube communicates with the lumen of the main catheter tube; a one-way valve adapted to permit passage of an antimicrobial agent-bearing intervention device between the side-arm tube lumen and the main catheter tube lumen while preventing fluid flow from the main catheter tube lumen through the side-arm tube lumen, wherein the one-way valve does not prevent fluid flow through the main catheter tube lumen, wherein the antimicrobial agent is configured to be released from the intervention device after the intervention device has been inserted into the main catheter tube lumen and a cap is coupled to a proximal end of the antimicrobial agent-bearing intervention device to facilitate user handling of

the antimicrobial agent-bearing intervention device without direct contact with the proximal end of the antimicrobial agent-bearing intervention device.

20. (Currently amended) The anti-infection catheter of claim 1924, wherein
 - the main catheter tube comprises a catheter body and an extension joined to a proximal end of the catheter body, and
 - the side-arm tube extends laterally from the catheter extension.
21. (Previously presented) The infection management system of claim 1, wherein the antimicrobial agent-bearing intervention device is configured to remain in the catheter lumen during fluid flow through the catheter lumen.
22. (Previously presented) The infection management system of claim 21, wherein the fluid flow is associated with a hemodialysis procedure.
23. (Previously presented) The infection management method of claim 10, wherein the antimicrobial agent-bearing intervention device is configured to remain in the catheter lumen during fluid flow through the catheter lumen.
24. (Previously presented) The infection management system of claim 23, wherein the fluid flow is associated with a hemodialysis procedure.
25. (Previously presented) The anti-infection catheter of claim 19, wherein the antimicrobial agent-bearing intervention device is configured to remain in the main catheter tube lumen during fluid flow through the main catheter tube lumen.
26. (Previously presented) The infection management system of claim 25, wherein the fluid flow is associated with a hemodialysis procedure.